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ANTI-CANTEEN LEGISLATION AND THE ARMY.—II.

BY C. E. LITTLEFIELD, MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

THE Hon. Elihu Root, late Secretary of War, opposed the anti-canteen legislation, and expressed before the Senate Committee on Military Affairs the apprehension that it would discourage enlistments, saying on that point:

“If you pass the provision which the House has put in, prohibiting the sale of beer and light wines in the Canteen, you break that up, and the result is going to be, as soon as it gets round, it will stop our enlistments. That is a matter of serious, practical consequence. The men are not going to enlist when they understand that they are going to be confined in a reform school.”

It must gratify Mr. Root to know that this doleful apprehension was unfounded, as this official table shows:

<i>Enlistments.</i>			
Year.	Per Month.	Year.	Per Month.
1889	800	1897	690
1890	654	1898	5,793
1891	703	1899	5,181
1892	821	1900	1,629
1893	756	1901	2,552
1894	654	1902	3,122
1895	648	1903	1,587
1896	707		

1898 and 1899 were war years, when enlistments are always greater, and the figures for these years include a large number of volunteer soldiers as distinguished from regulars.

The two whole years 1901--2 show an average of 2,837 as against an average of 715 per year for the nine years prior to the war, and under normal Canteen conditions, or four times as many per

year when the "reform school" was staring the recruit in the face. The "reform school" does not appear to have been a very vigorous deterrent. During the latter period, moreover, the Government has been exercising greater care in the selection of its men. Where 30,622 were enlisted in the year ending June 30th, 1901, 86,407 applications were rejected. During the year 1902, while 37,461 enlisted, 87,081 applications were rejected; and during the year 1903, 18,961 were enlisted and 74,256 rejected, showing that now where they enlist one they reject about three or four. The instructions for recruiting issued September 23rd, 1901, no doubt account for these rejections and also show the unfavorable conditions under which enlistments have largely increased. The first requirement was, that "applicants for first enlistment must be between the ages of eighteen and thirty-five years, *of good character and temperate habits*, able-bodied, free from disease, and must be able to speak, read and write the English language." Inasmuch as, under the War Department's theory of the Canteen, the recruit is to be at once introduced to the official sale of beer in the Canteen, and the maximum of sale is essential to the maximum of prosperity of the Canteen, this regulation should read "*of good character and temperate habits, vigorous and efficient consumers of beer, of approved capacity preferred, etc.*" While the considerations heretofore suggested certainly at least tend to destroy the value of statistics, comparing the Canteen period with the years preceding and succeeding it, so far as the Anti-Canteen law is concerned, there are other reasons which are also potent to show that these statistics do not justify the conclusions sought to be drawn therefrom. I cannot state them more effectively than they have been stated by a practical soldier, who has won his rank by brave, gallant and heroic conduct in battle, on the firing line, in every war in which the army has been engaged since 1861, including the Expedition to China in 1900, Brigadier-General Daggett, U. S. A. He says:

"Captain Munson, Assistant-Surgeon, U. S. Army, has published statistics which seem to favor the Canteen. The Army has been constantly improving since its reorganization in 1866. Then, a very large proportion of the officers had just been appointed from the volunteers and from civil life. They were unfamiliar with the ways and regulations of garrison life. Not many, if any, officers were familiar with the conditions at that time. All had to learn, from the highest to the lowest. The

class of recruits was the worst that has ever been introduced into the Army. The barracks were poor, dirty, forbidding buildings, poorly lighted and heated. Candles were used, and a small allowance of them at that. Bunks were of rough boards and three stories high. A bed sack, filled with straw, and a blanket or two furnished the soldier's bed. A tin plate, an iron knife, fork and spoon, were his table utensils. The principal ration was bacon, or pork, occasionally beef, and bread, coffee, sugar and beans.

"Improvement in these things began in the '70's. Now the barracks are warm, cheerful and well lighted. The beds and mess are much better than most recruits enjoyed at their homes. Then the recruiting officer could enlist whomsoever he pleased. Since then, he has been held responsible for the utmost care in selecting men, morally and physically, on penalty of having to pay the expenses of clothing, feeding and transporting the recruit to his station, should he be rejected after arriving, and should it be shown that the recruiting officer had been negligent.

"Benevolent societies also began to furnish the soldiers with reading matter, etc. Many other things were done for the betterment of the soldiers. The army of new officers of 1866, after fifteen or twenty years of experience, had learned how to command and care for men. Too much importance cannot be attached to this consideration. The fruits of all these things must necessarily have been a great reduction in desertions, admissions to hospital for alcoholism, and convictions by court-martial.

"Now, Mr. Munson comes in and gives the Canteen credit, largely, for these improvements. He makes 1889, the date of formal establishment of the Canteen by the War Department, the central period of reckoning. The Canteen had existed to some extent for four years before that time, but leave that out of consideration. The number of desertions from 1867 to 1874 was equal to 20.5 per cent. From 1876 to 1880, they were equal to 8.4 per cent. President Hayes prohibited the sale of intoxicants to post-traders during this period. From 1881 to 1889, the number of desertions was equal to 12 per cent. From 1890 to 1897, 5 per cent. From 1898 to 1900, 4.4 per cent. From 1900 to 1901, only 1.9 per cent. This latter period is not for the whole year, but up to a recent date, but there has been no Canteen since February 2nd.

"The number of admissions to hospital for alcoholism during the Canteen period, from 1891 to 1897, decreased 12.2 per thousand, while during the preceding period, from 1882 to 1890, the number decreased 27.3 per thousand.

"These statistics show that a decrease in desertions and admissions to hospital for alcoholism began long before the Canteen was thought of, and has been going on up to the present time, and that it was more rapid before than since the Canteen was established."

General Daggett makes the following suggestions:

"(1) Establish ample and attractive reading-rooms, which may be the general places of resort, and where games and facilities for all sorts of proper social enjoyments can be found.

" (2) Establish ample and attractive gymnasiums.

" (3) Encourage and give facilities for all proper kinds of manly sports.

" (4) Require the Commissary Department to supply many of the luxuries now furnished by means of the company fund."

These are covered by the appropriations made and proposed.

Moreover, the following tables taken from official records and reports, comparing the Canteen period with subsequent years, although in the absence of the proposed recreation buildings and company fund, essential to the success of the legislation, give results that on the whole are unfavorable to the Canteen.

Cases of Alcoholism, United States Army.

Year.	Mean Strength.	Rate, per 1,000.	Year.	Mean Strength.	Rate, per 1,000.
1889.....	25,908	41.43	1896.....	25,119	29.06
1890.....	24,234	40.73	1897.....	25,417	27.86
1891.....	23,928	40.01	1898.....	46,635	15.16
1892.....	24,203	37.23	1899.....	64,446	18.70
1893.....	25,287	33.97	1900.....	68,955	18.38
1894.....	25,376	30.94	1901.....	81,885	23.80
1895.....	25,204	30.11	1902.....	80,778	22.65

This shows an average rate per 1,000, from 1889 to 1900 inclusive (excluding the war years), of 32.97 per year for the Canteen period, an average of 16.93 for the war years, and of 23.23 for the years 1901--2 without the Canteen, or 9.74 better than the Canteen period. The percentage of convictions for drunkenness, based upon fiscal years, taken from the Judge-Advocate-General's report for 1903, shows:

Year.	Rate, per 1,000.	Year.	Rate, per 1,000.
1889	1.4	1896	1.0
1890	1.6	1897	1.1
1891	1.6	1898	1.1
1892	1.7	1899	1.2
1893	1.4	1900	2.3
1894	1.2	1902	1.2
1895	.9	1903	1.2

The average percentage for the Canteen period was 1.3+; the rate since the Canteen period was 1.2, leaving out the year 1901, as that was divided between the two periods, a difference against the Canteen of .1+.

Sickness in the Army.

Year.	Admission to Hospital.	Rate, per 1,000	Year.	Admission to Hospital.	Rate, per 1,000.
1889.....	32,886	1,315.02	1896.....	27,892	1,110.39
1890.....	33,546	1,384.25	1897.....	30,160	1,186.61
1891.....	31,757	1,364.78	1898.....	317,195	2,146.18
1892.....	30,748	1,270.42	1899.....	229,885	2,178.06
1893.....	32,596	1,289.04	1900.....	232,080	2,311.81
1894.....	27,653	1,089.73	1901.....	165,706	1,791.59
1895.....	27,982	1,110.22	1902.....	138,656	1,716.51

This gives an average rate per thousand of 1,343.23 for the Canteen period of 1889--1900, inclusive (excluding the war years), 2,162.09 for the war years, and 1,754.05 since the Canteen.

While this shows a considerable increase over the Canteen period, it must be remembered that the larger part of the Army has during the latter period been subjected to unusually unhealthy conditions by service in the tropics not previously experienced.

Desertions in the Army.

Year.	Mean Strength.	Percentage of Desertions.	Year.	Mean Strength.	Percentage of Desertions.
1889.....	25,564	11.	1897.....	25,304	2.9
1890.....	24,930	7.7	1898.....	44,397	4.
1891.....	24,525	5.7	1899.....	62,019	4.9
1892.....	24,867	5.7	1900.....	66,460	4.4
1893.....	25,670	6.3	1901.....	78,863	5.2
1894.....	25,661	3.6	1902.....	71,294	7.5
1895.....	25,200	5.3	1903 (six mos.)	61,498	2.8
1896.....	25,143	3.4			

This table from the Adjutant-General's report is based on calendar years, and shows an average for the Canteen period of 5.79 per cent., and since of 5.66 per cent., a difference against the Canteen of .13 per cent.

The figures furnished by the Lieutenant-General, in his report for 1901, show that the desertions have been gradually decreasing since 1867, when the percentage was 26.7. For the next twelve years, the average was 16.5, for the decade ending 1888 the average was 11.4, and for the twenty-two years preceding 1889 the average was 14.2, showing that the decrease in desertions has been due not to the Canteen, but to other causes. These are to some extent pointed out by Acting-Judge-Advocate Captain C. D. Roberts, of the Department of Texas, in his annual report dated June 16th, 1903, in which he says:

"The large number of trials for desertion in this department in the last two years is due largely to the great number of recruits in the

ranks and the number of new and inexperienced officers. The three-year enlistment is undoubtedly bad for discipline. The general mess system is in operation at Forts Bliss and Sam Houston, and to this system is undoubtedly due some of the trials at those posts, since under it there is always more or less discontent among the troops with the food furnished and the cooking."

The fact that the existing conditions furnish no proper criterion upon which to base a comparison also appears from the official report of the Inspector-General for the year 1903. He says:

"It is more the exception than the rule that prescribed regulations for the government of the post exchanges are strictly complied with. . . . The reports for 64 posts in the United States, Alaska, Cuba, Porto Rico and Honolulu, show that 14 had no post exchanges, and at the 50 having them the rooms used for that purpose were generally unattractive, not satisfactory, and lacking in accommodations. At 20 of these 50, they were especially mentioned as unsuitable. At a few posts suitable buildings were being constructed for exchange and gymnastic purposes. The reports for 94 posts in the Philippine Islands show only 8 enjoying the privilege of an exchange. There were many desertions and few reenlistments at a number of posts. Drunkenness and absence without leave are noted in reports, and trials by courts-martial are very numerous. *It is believed that a well-regulated post exchange and a thoroughly equipped gymnasium would accomplish more toward contentment and discipline in the Army than almost anything the Government can, under the law, accomplish.*"

Major Elijah W. Halford's statement of conditions in the Philippines emphasizes this idea. He says:

"A temperance Canteen has been tried in at least four posts here in the Islands, with good measure of success. At one post sales amounted to \$500 per month; profits averaged \$135 monthly during the eighty days it had been operated when report was made. It had very limited facilities; no capital, poor room, no sympathy from the officers, no soda fountain, hard to get ice, and other obstacles. With good facilities, with the sympathy of officers, and eliminating the poorly-disguised devil of profit as in the old Canteen, this is the practical solution of the 'Canteen' question for all soldiers except the chronic drinkers, who will have whiskey anyway, beer Canteen or no beer Canteen. These begin their drunks in the beer Canteen, but end them outside in the whiskey shops."

The attitude of the War Department as to this legislation is an essential feature affecting its success. On the 5th of February, 1901, three days after the anti-canteen law was enacted, the Adjutant-General issued an order for the collection of statistics

showing the operation of the law, "report thereon to be made to this office not later than September 1st next," covering a period of the non-existence of conditions essential to its success, during which the law might be expected to result adversely. On February 19th, 1901, Senator Gallinger, an earnest friend of the legislation, introduced, as an amendment to the Army appropriation bill, the following:

"Difference between the cost of the ration at 25 cents and the amount of 26½ cents, to be expended under the direction of the Secretary of War for the purpose of laying out, preparing, and cultivating gardens, and supplying seeds, roots, and plants for the same: the purchase of books, periodicals, stationery, etc., for the post exchange library: the purchase of gymnastic appliances: prizes for athletic sports: towards the support of regimental bands: for the purchase of articles of food other than those supplied by the regular ration: and for the further improvement of the post exchange, to be equally distributed among the enlisted men, \$547,500."

Practically the company-fund idea, though it is believed that the fund should be apportioned to companies and expended by the captain to produce the best results. This went to the military committee, where it slept the sleep of the just, as it was never reported therefrom.

In a letter to the Hon. W. J. Sewall, under date of August 29th, 1900, Adjutant-General Corbin made this statement:

"The official reports of the Department show that the receipts from sales of beer and light wines are and have been less than one-third of gross receipts, being in 1898 five-seventeenths and in 1899 six-seventeenths. Taking the amount of gross receipts on account of sale of beer and dividing it by the total number of officers and men shows that each officer and enlisted man for the year 1898 expended on account of beer only 20 cents a month—equivalent to four glasses of beer per month, or less than one glass a week apiece, for each officer and man in the military service. In 1899 the expenditure on the part of each officer and man reached an average of 58 cents per month, or but 1.9 cents a day. These facts make it clear that in comparison with all other citizens the army of to-day is the most abstemious body in our country. There is no community of which we have any report or knowledge that will show so small a consumption of drink *per capita*."

It will be observed that these conclusions are based upon statistics for the years 1898--9.

Under date of December 17th, 1903, Acting-Adjutant-General W. P. Hall wrote me a courteous letter from which I quote:

"When the troops were withdrawn from the military posts in April, 1898, and assembled in camps on the Gulf coast for the purpose of taking part in the impending war with Spain, they were compelled to abandon their post exchanges at the permanent stations, leaving behind them such stock of beer and wine as was then on hand. The most of this stock became a waste—a dead loss, in fact—for, before the troops returned to the permanent forts, the Act of March 2, 1899, had prevented its sale, and as the persons from whom it was purchased refused to take it back, it was destroyed or given away. It was nearly a year afterwards before those posts were regarrisoned, and in but very few instances by the troops which constituted the garrisons at the time of the breaking out of the war with Spain. As a consequence we were unable to get any satisfactory reports of Post Exchange transactions for the period commencing about the middle of April, 1898, to the 1st of July, 1899. . . . It would be difficult to give with any accuracy 'the number of men in the service located at the places of Posts, in 1898 and 1899, where such Canteens or Post Exchanges were being operated with the sale of beer and wine therein,' or to give 'the total sales of beer and wine at each of these Canteens' for those years."

If Acting-Adjutant-General Hall is correct, and I have no doubt he is, where there are no "satisfactory reports" for nearly nine months in 1898, and six months in 1899, and the number of men and the amount of beer and wine sold cannot be given "with any accuracy" during those years, it is difficult to imagine where General Corbin got the statistics upon which to base his very specific statement.

It has been my misfortune to endeavor to assist, in my humble way, that distinguished gentleman in making this legislation a success, and promoting the welfare of our soldiers. Mr. Francis A. Buzzacott, a member of the Third Illinois, during the Spanish War, operated a Post Exchange in connection with that regiment. The records show that, during several months of its existence, its profits cleared its original cost, and amounted in all to \$5,000, all of which was turned over to the regiment and distributed and used by its various companies during its campaign in the tropics. It was operated in a tent, mammoth in size, capable of holding fifteen hundred, and benches for three hundred troops. It had a restaurant and lunch counter, magazines and moral literature, and sold everything a soldier needed, except liquor, which was not allowed to be either sold or used on

the premises. It had an organ, and musical entertainments were given. The regiment marched in a body to divine service therein on Sunday.

It closed up two beer Canteens in its vicinity, and the soldiers boycotted their own Canteens for the temperance Canteen. On December 8th, 1900, two days after the introduction of the anti-canteen amendment, Mr. Buzzacott renewed his offer to the Secretary of War, proposing to establish a similar Canteen, to be "conducted *under military regulations*, for the recreation, benefit and modern advantages of such United States volunteer troops as are now serving in the Philippines." The proposition is too long to quote in full, but it provided for furnishing everything that was desirable or requisite for the comfort, convenience and entertainment of the men. He proposed to furnish the "money to do this." The profits, except ten per cent. to be used in establishing like Canteens in other Posts or places, were to go to the men. Three months after its establishment, he agreed to turn it "over to the Government troops completely equipped as described, free of cost or indebtedness whatsoever"; during this time it was to be under his "personal supervision and control," "*subject to the approval of the generals commanding.*"

He asked for transportation to be furnished, authority to purchase supplies of any department of the establishment at cost, that a commissioned officer be detailed as executive officer in charge, and a private soldier from each company as police, "not to interfere with other military duties." This proposition not receiving favorable action and impressing me as both feasible and commendable, I made the effort indicated by the subjoined correspondence to have it adopted by the War Department.

"HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, U. S.

"WASHINGTON, D. C.,

"ROCKLAND, ME., March 8, 1901.

"Hon. Elihu Root,

"Secretary of War, Washington, D. C.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I am very anxious that the Canteen as now constituted, or that the Canteen in which the sale of intoxicating liquors is prohibited in accordance with the recent amendment to the army bill, shall prove to be successful in its operation. I have just taken occasion to examine the offer made by Mr. Francis H. Buzzacott, of Chicago, Illinois, under date of December 8, 1900, for the carrying on and operating of a temperance Canteen, and it seems to me that the offer is a very desirable

one. It involves no cost or expense to the government, and Mr. Buzzacott proposes to subject himself in all respects to the supervision and control of the Department, and the generals commanding the United States troops under whose authority he is placed at work.

"I should be very much gratified, and I certainly hope you may see your way clear to allow him to establish as many of these Canteens as he desires to, especially in the Philippines.

"If they prove to be a success I do not see any reason why they should not be located wherever our troops are located.

"If it is not asking too much I should be very glad to have you advise me of the views you take of his proposition, and the probability of its acceptance.

"Very respectfully,

"C. E. LITTLEFIELD."

"ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE, WASHINGTON.

"March 11, 1901.

"Hon. C. E. Littlefield,

"House of Representatives,

"SIR,—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th instant to the Secretary of War, in which you commend to the favorable consideration of the department an offer of Mr. Francis H. Buzzacott, of Chicago, Illinois, for the carrying on and operating of a temperance Canteen, and replying thereto permit me to say that the proposition of Mr. Buzzacott has been carefully considered and does not commend itself to the department.

"Very respectfully,

"H. C. CORBIN,

"Adjutant-General."

"HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, WASHINGTON.

"ROCKLAND, ME., March 14, 1901.

"General H. C. Corbin,

"Adjutant-General U. S. A., Washington, D. C.,

"MY DEAR SIR,—Yours of the 11th at hand, and I note that you say that the proposition of Mr. Buzzacott has been carefully considered and does not commend itself to the department.

"I have been advised that there was nothing unmilitary in Mr. Buzzacott's proposition, or that would be inconsistent with the regulations of the department. Will you be kind enough to advise me in what particulars the proposition did not meet the approval of the department, or the reason the department has for declining to accept it, as I may be able to procure such a modification of the proposition as will make it acceptable to the department.

"It seems to me that something of this kind is extremely desirable if the present legislation is to be successful, and I have no doubt but what the War Department is anxious to make the Canteen conducted under the existing legislation as attractive and efficient as possible, in

taking the place of the Canteen as heretofore carried on, involving the sale of beer and possibly other intoxicating drinks therein.

"Very respectfully,

"C. E. LITTLEFIELD."

"WAR DEPARTMENT,

"ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE, WASHINGTON.

"March 22, 1901.

"Hon. Chas. E. Littlefield, M. C.,

"House of Representatives,

"SIR,—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th instant, in the matter of the proposition of Mr. Buzzacott, to establish temperance Canteens at military posts, in which, referring to department letter of the 11th instant to the effect that the proposition of Mr. Buzzacott has been carefully considered and does not commend itself to the department, you ask to be advised in what particular the proposition does not meet the approval of the department, or the reason the department has for declining to accept.

"Replying thereto, I have the honor to remark that the proposition of Mr. Buzzacott does not commend itself to the approval of the department *for the reason that the army is perfectly capable of conducting its own affairs in respect to Post Exchanges, as well as to other matters connected with its administration*, and that the conditions vary at military posts and stations in the army, the greater portion of which is now in the field, in tropical countries, and it is believed that Mr. Buzzacott, having served in the army for a number of years in various capacities, knows as well as any other man of military experience, that the proposition to place a civilian in charge of affairs in a military command cannot be successfully carried out. Mr. Buzzacott must also be aware that the law forbids the Quartermaster's Department to furnish transportation to an establishment of this character, or for any supplies intended for it; that it forbids the sale to him and his employees of subsistence stores at cost; in fact that the residence on a military reservation of persons not in the employ of the United States government is forbidden by law. Briefly, there are other objections and difficulties to this proposition, which are too numerous to mention.

"Very respectfully,

"H. C. CORBIN,

"Adjutant-General."

In other words, if you will attend to your business I will attend to mine. I thought then, and I think now, that I had an undoubted right, in view of the fact that I was responsible in part at least for the legislation, even if it was not my duty, to deferentially offer suggestions, and invite suggestions, intended to promote its success. I thought then, and I think now, that I had a right to assume that the War Department had a due and proper regard

for the welfare of our soldiers, and was desirous of administering the law in good faith so as to make it as effective and successful as possible, so that it might prove helpful to that welfare. I supposed the War Department would cheerfully welcome anything that would contribute to that end. When, however, my well-meant and courteous advances were received by the vigorous official suggestion, that "*the army was perfectly capable of conducting its own affairs in respect to Post Exchanges, as well as to other matters connected with its administration,*" no outside interference being tolerated, the incident was closed, as it did not seem to me that any self-respecting man was required to submit himself further to "the insolence of office"; and efforts on my part to cooperate with the War Department were abandoned, even at the risk of my being afterwards charged with having wrapped about myself "the cloak of self-righteous content and left the Army to care for itself."

The first appropriation of \$500,000 for Post Exchanges was made at the next session after the passage of the amendment, and became available on July 1st, 1902. If not used prior to July 1st, 1903, it would have lapsed back into the Treasury. I am in receipt of a letter from the Department, under date of December 26th, 1903, advising me that, under the appropriation for the fiscal year of 1903, the Secretary of War had authorized expenditures in January, 1903, of \$2,712.09; in April, 1903, of \$96,417.95; in May, 1903, of \$336,995.91; and in June, 1903, of \$39,868. Not a dollar, that is to say, was authorized to be expended until the whole sum had been available six months and then only \$2,712.09; and the bulk of the appropriation, \$336,995.91, was not authorized to be expended, until it had been available more than ten months. The average percentage of completion of work under sixteen different authorizations on September 30, 1903, was forty-three per cent., only one building, at Fort Brady, Michigan, costing \$19,819, being then nearly completed.

Certainly, the War Department cannot fairly be charged with being precipitate, or with exercising undue haste. We may be fairly safe, I think, in assuming that, if this appropriation had been a revolution with a canal-site attachment, its period of gestation would not have been prolonged for ten months and sixteen days. If the War Department had been as anxious to create favorable conditions in that regard, as it was to get statistics when the

conditions essential to the success of the anti-canteen legislation were absent, and had exercised the same degree of diligence, these authorizations would have been made July 3, 1902. On the other hand, so profound has been its solicitude for the welfare of the men under its charge that, although \$500,000 has been available therefor since June 30, 1902, and \$1,000,000 since June 30, 1903, only a trifling sum up to October 30th, 1903, had been actually used in promoting that welfare, as not a building had then been fully completed, and only small sums had been used for other purposes of that character.

It is unfortunate and regrettable that the discontent and the discomfort of the men, with all of the direful consequences resulting therefrom, and especially "that craving for drink which results in no small part from the monotony of barrack life that slowly breeds discontent, no matter how comfortably housed or well-fed the men may be," should be unnecessarily prolonged, when the means for its alleviation have been so liberally provided and have been lying idle so long. When the last item upon the *menu* for a Thanksgiving dinner for the soldiers at the Columbus Barracks, Ohio, November 26th, 1902, was "one quart of beer for each soldier," it would not appear that, from a social point of view, any very vigorous effort was being made by the officers to restrain the indulgence in beer and encourage total abstinence. This is not the only instance of the kind.

I do not say whether the administration of this legislation is in the hands of its friends or otherwise, nor do I characterize the attitude of the Department. Upon its record of calling for statistics within three days of the passage of the law, when statistics must have been expected to be unfavorable in the absence of proper conditions, its contemptuous refusal of the Buzzacott proposition, its collection and gratuitous presentation of only such newspaper reports as were adverse to the legislation, and its failure promptly to utilize the appropriation that was to take the place of the beer profits, a fair-minded, disinterested, intelligent and patriotic people can judge for themselves as to its attitude.

In the light of all these facts, how much foundation is there for Colonel Church's assertion, that "the advocates of total abstinence say, in effect, that, if there is any man in the Army who refuses to accept theories that are rejected by the vast majority of men in this and every other civilized country, and who

will drink, he should be permitted to go to the devil, and the shorter the road and the faster the pace, the better." If we may be permitted to use the Colonel's choice and delicate language, we may ask, Who is it, in the light of the foregoing facts, that is keeping the obstructions out of the soldiers way "to the devil," shortening the road and accelerating the pace? The Colonel seems gratified to feel that he is with the "vast majority," laboring under the impression, evidently, that facts are settled that way. This is calculated to disconcert the "Big Four" and other railroads, to make them realize that when, in order to secure keen, alert, clear-minded and efficient men, they promulgate an order that their employees must not drink intoxicating liquors at all, whether on or off duty, they are in the minority in a "civilized country." If such a course will secure better men for railroading, it may be worthy of consideration whether it would not work as well in other cases. Do we need, especially in time of war, as good men for officers and men, from the standpoint of efficiency, as the railroads find they need in their business? If so, should we not make reasonable efforts to get them? King Edward evidently did not realize how lonesome he would be, when, in a recent letter to an officer of the Navy, this sentence was inserted: "His Majesty would be glad if it is circulated privately, that he considers his health is as much honored by those who drink it in water as by those who drink it in wine," an insidious and really reprehensible incentive to that vulgar and degrading, and rather uncommon, habit of total abstinence. Let us hope that the adverse sentiment of our noble Army, voiced so mildly by Colonel Church, may be broken to His Majesty gently and by degrees. Notwithstanding the Colonel's fervor, temperance is now being officially taught in the French and British, and encouraged in the German and Russian armies. A temperance society is one of the established institutions of the British Army. H. R. H. the Duke of Cambridge was its patron General; H. R. H. the Duke of Connaught is its President, and Field-Marshal Lord Wolseley is its First Vice-President. The flower of the officers of that Army take pride in identifying themselves with it, and the government contributes handsomely for its financial support. We are either not far enough or too far advanced for such an institution in our Army. We think this legislation is in line with the most advanced thought, even if it may be in the minority.

That a Post Exchange, with proper provisions for recreation, amusement and entertainment and supplies for the men, and a company fund are essential to the success of this legislation, is, we think, clear. Its friends, and especially the Rev. E. C. Dinwiddie and Mrs. Margaret Dye Ellis, the able, faithful, efficient and untiring legislative representatives, respectively, of the American Anti-Saloon League and the W. C. T. U. at Washington, have been doing their best to procure and have utilized the necessary appropriations therefor. Instead of compelling the soldier to rely upon the profits of a beer saloon, whose sole customer he is, for furnishing him with the things essential to his welfare, we think he has a right to look to the people, by whom he has been placed in a condition where these things have become essential.

We think we are entitled, upon the facts, to ask the country to believe that we are inspired by a sincere desire to promote the highest welfare of the Army, rather than by a narrow purpose to enforce upon the officers and men any personal views we may entertain. And as the officers are as a rule high-minded, honorable gentlemen, we believe that, when they fully appreciate the situation, they will credit us with that desire.

For the beer saloon we substitute the Treasury of the United States. In the effort to make this substitution, we believe we have the sympathy and support of all right-thinking citizens, and that we ought to have the hearty cooperation of the War Department and the officers of the Army. We sincerely believe and earnestly hope that the substitution will prove a perfect success; but when it shall have been made, and shall have had a fair trial under such favorable conditions as are herein mentioned, if it shall prove to affect injuriously the condition of our soldiers, we will cheerfully join in a movement to reestablish the beer saloon. There is practically an agreement that the sale of beer is at least the lesser of two evils. Every report that has been made, every opinion that has been expressed, every resolution that has been adopted, has been made, expressed and adopted in the absence of conditions that all believe desirable, and that we believe essential. Should not judgment be suspended until these conditions have been created, and until they have had time to demonstrate their utility and wisdom? Would not a reversal of this legislation before that time be ill-considered, ill-advised and unwarranted?

C. E. LITTLEFIELD.